

WCA UPDATE

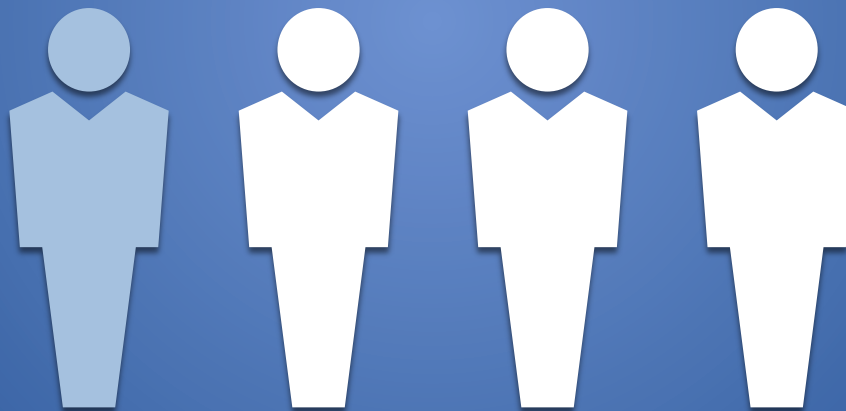


Overview

- Wisconsin State Legislature
- Public's Attitudes Towards Government
- How a Bill Becomes a Law
- Trends of the Three Forms of County Government

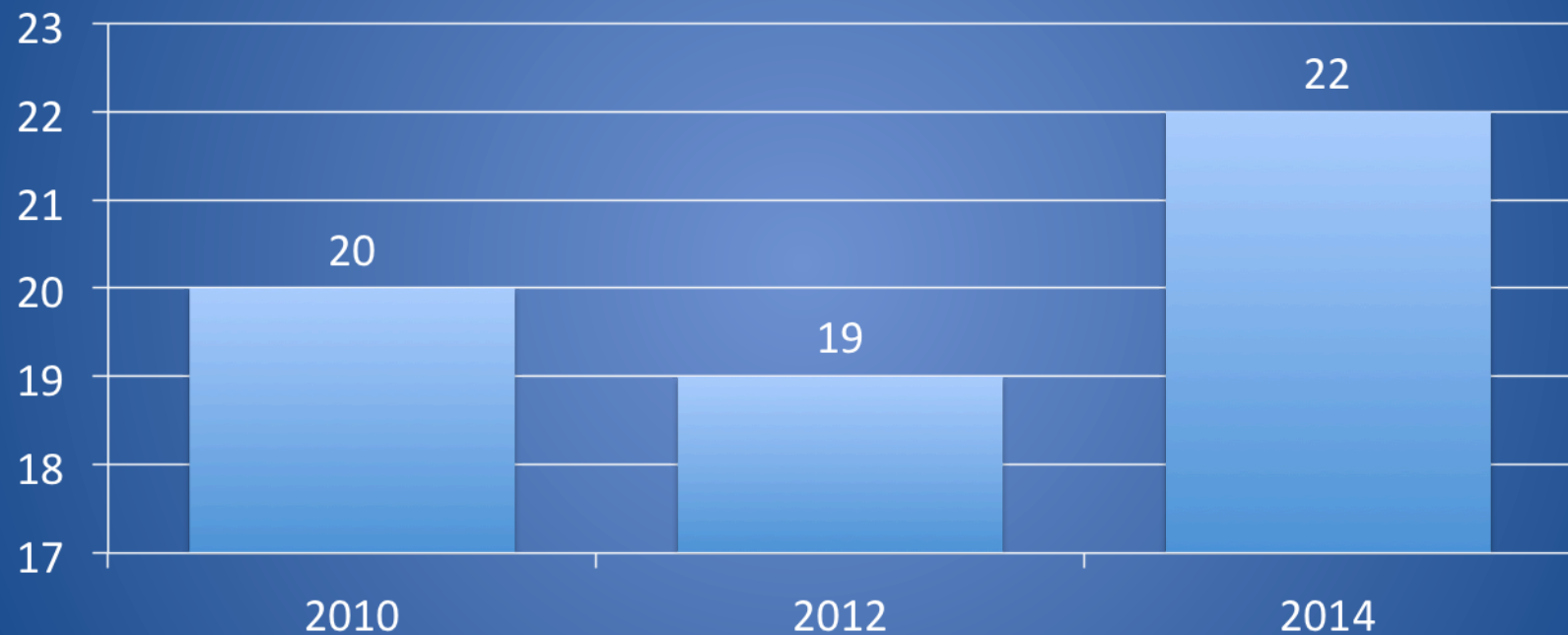
New Faces in the State Legislature

ONE IN FOUR LAWMAKERS DID NOT
SEEK RE-ELECTION TO THEIR CURRENT
OFFICE



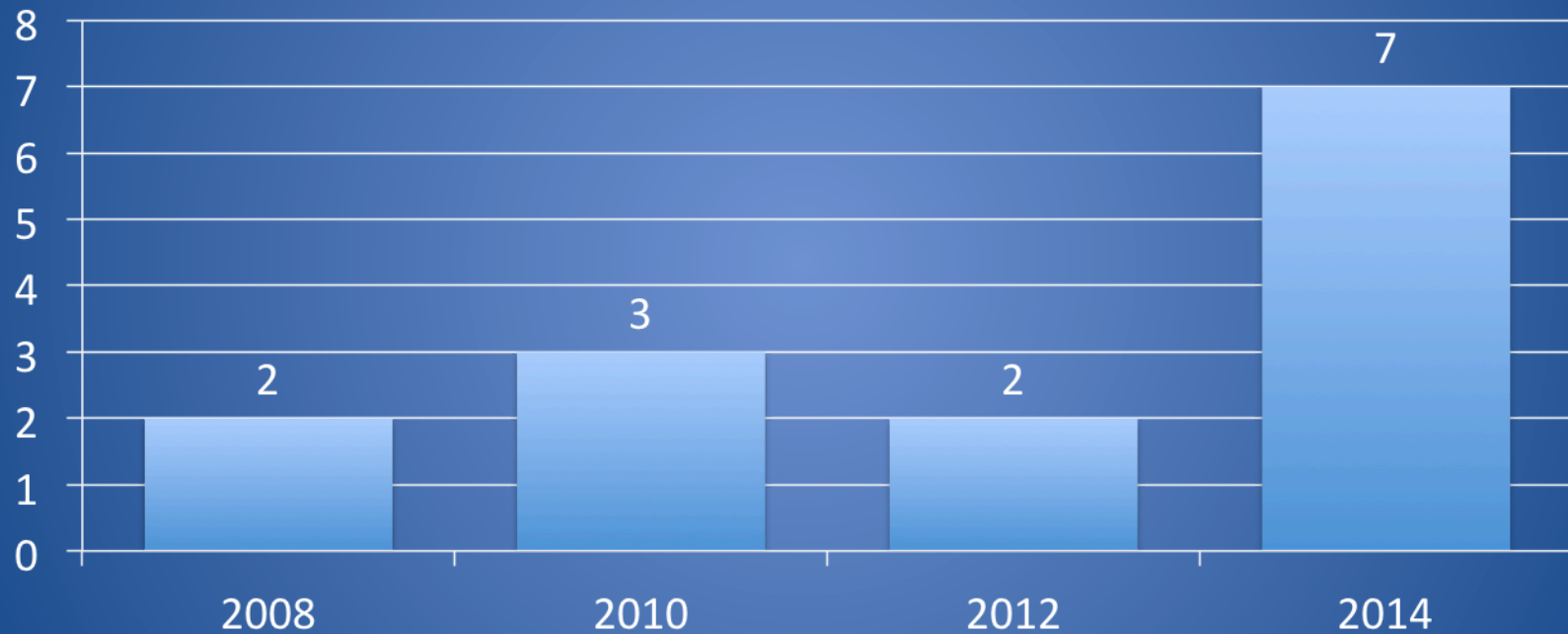
State Assembly Turnover

State Representatives Not Seeking Re-election



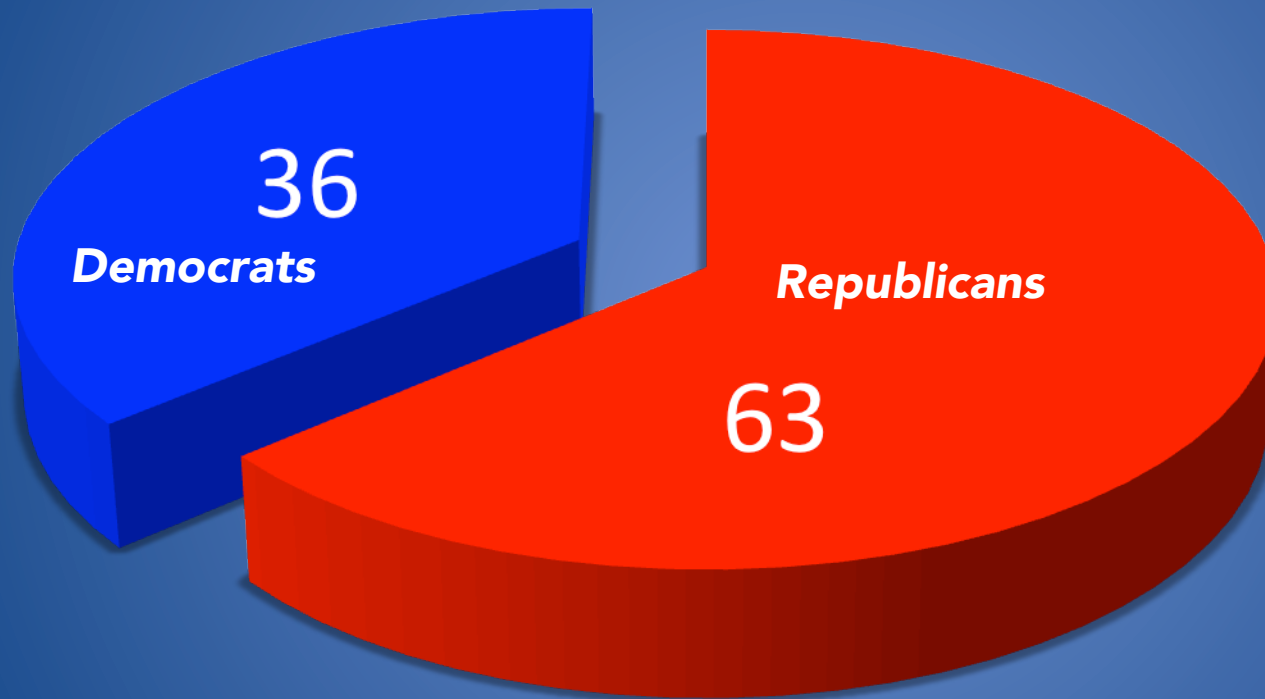
State Senate Turnover

State Senators Not Seeking Re-election



Legislative Composition

Wisconsin State Assembly



ASSEMBLY LEADERS

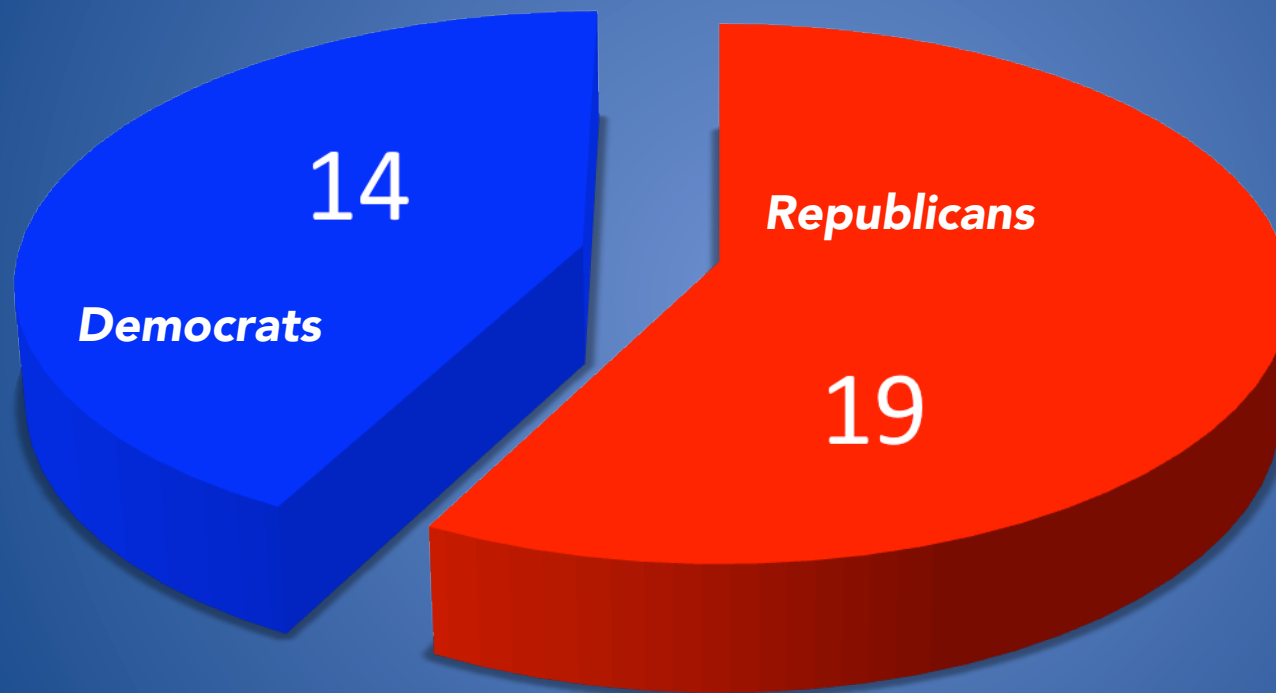


Assembly Speaker Robin Vos



Assembly Minority Leader Peter Barca

Wisconsin State Senate



SENATE LEADERS



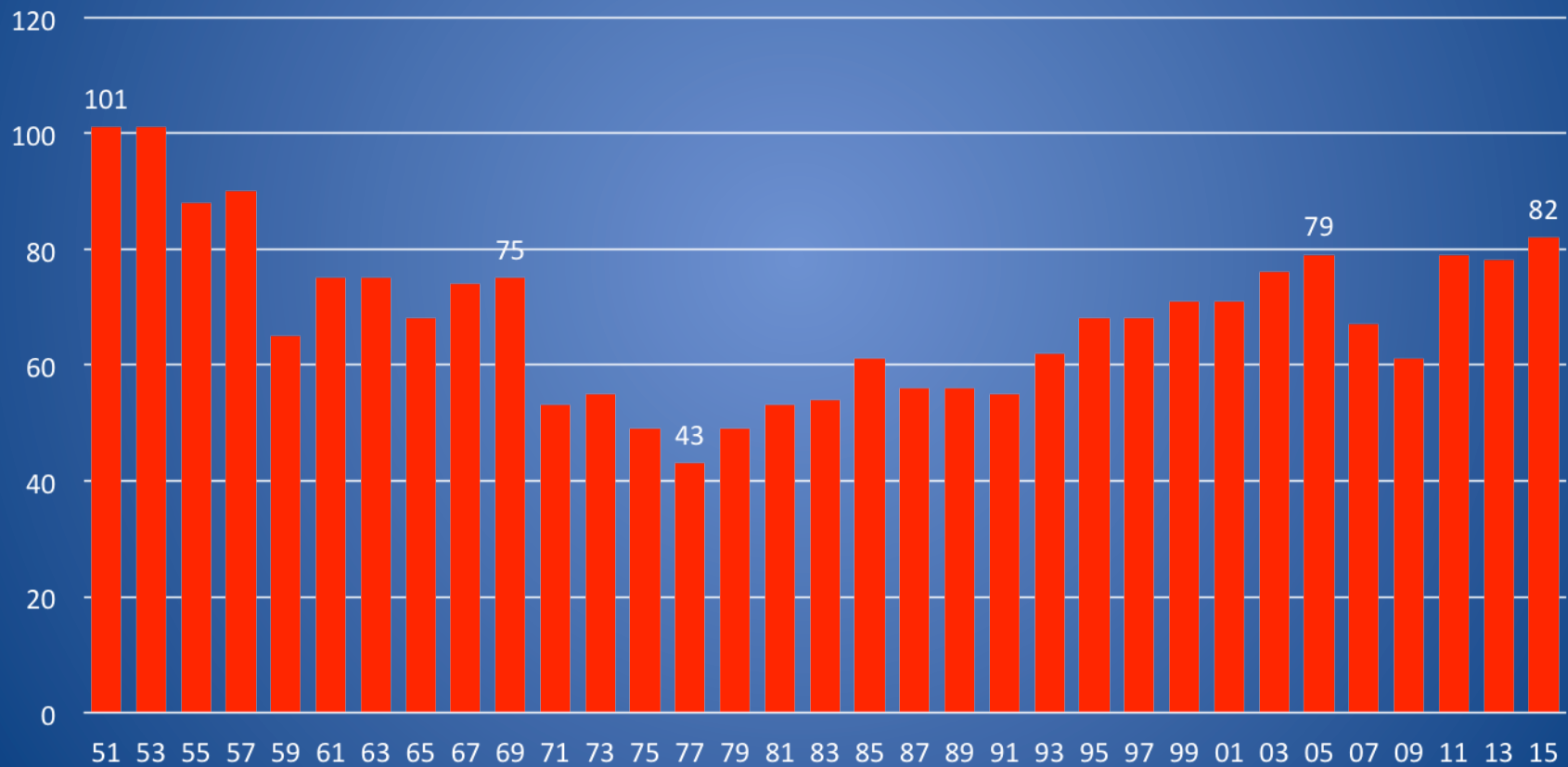
Senate Majority Leader Scott Fitzgerald



Senate Minority Leader Jennifer Shilling

Historical Perspective

of Republicans in State Legislature



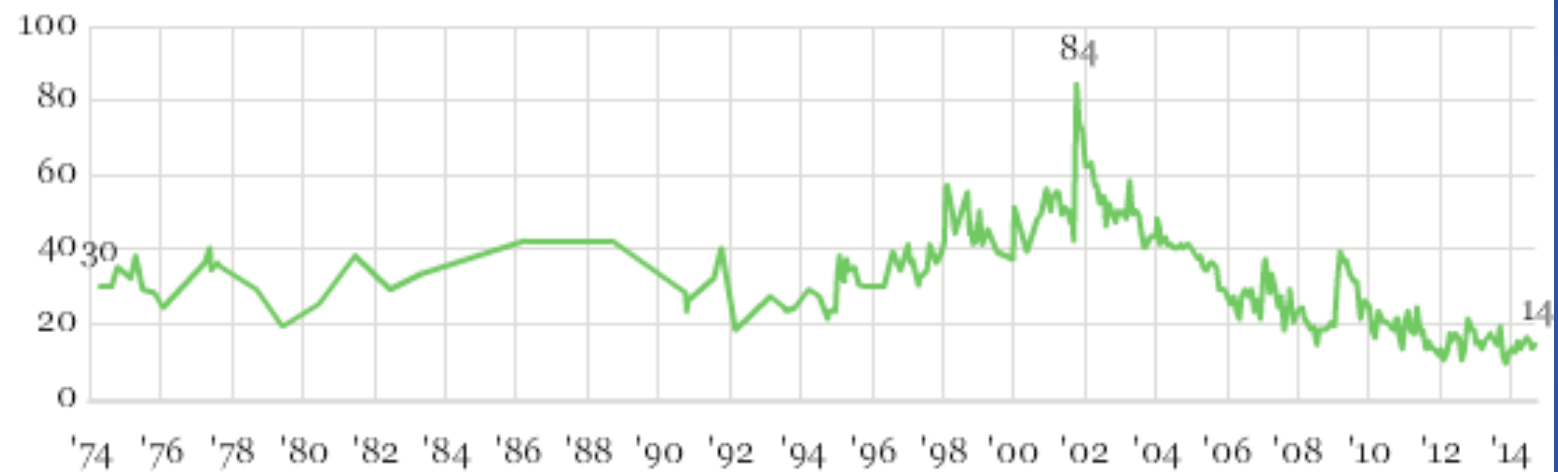
Takeaways

- **Unprecedented Legislative Turnover**
 - The 2015-2016 Wisconsin Legislature is one of the least experienced in state history. To achieve success, organizations and entities must educate new and existing members early and often!
- **GOP Legislative Majorities Remain**
 - Important for organizations and entities to “frame” their priority issues in ways that relate to GOP priorities (e.g., economic development, workforce development, tax cuts, government “reform”)

Public Attitudes Towards Government

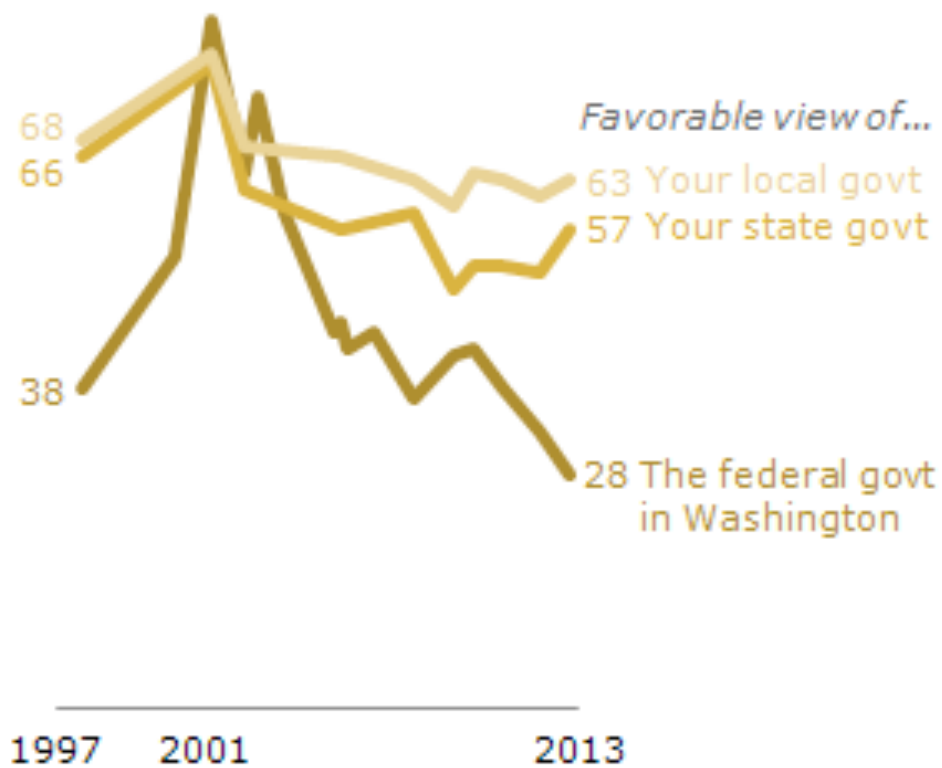
Congressional Job Approval Ratings Trend (1974-Present)

■ % Approve



GALLUP

Widening Gap in Views of Federal, State and Local Governments



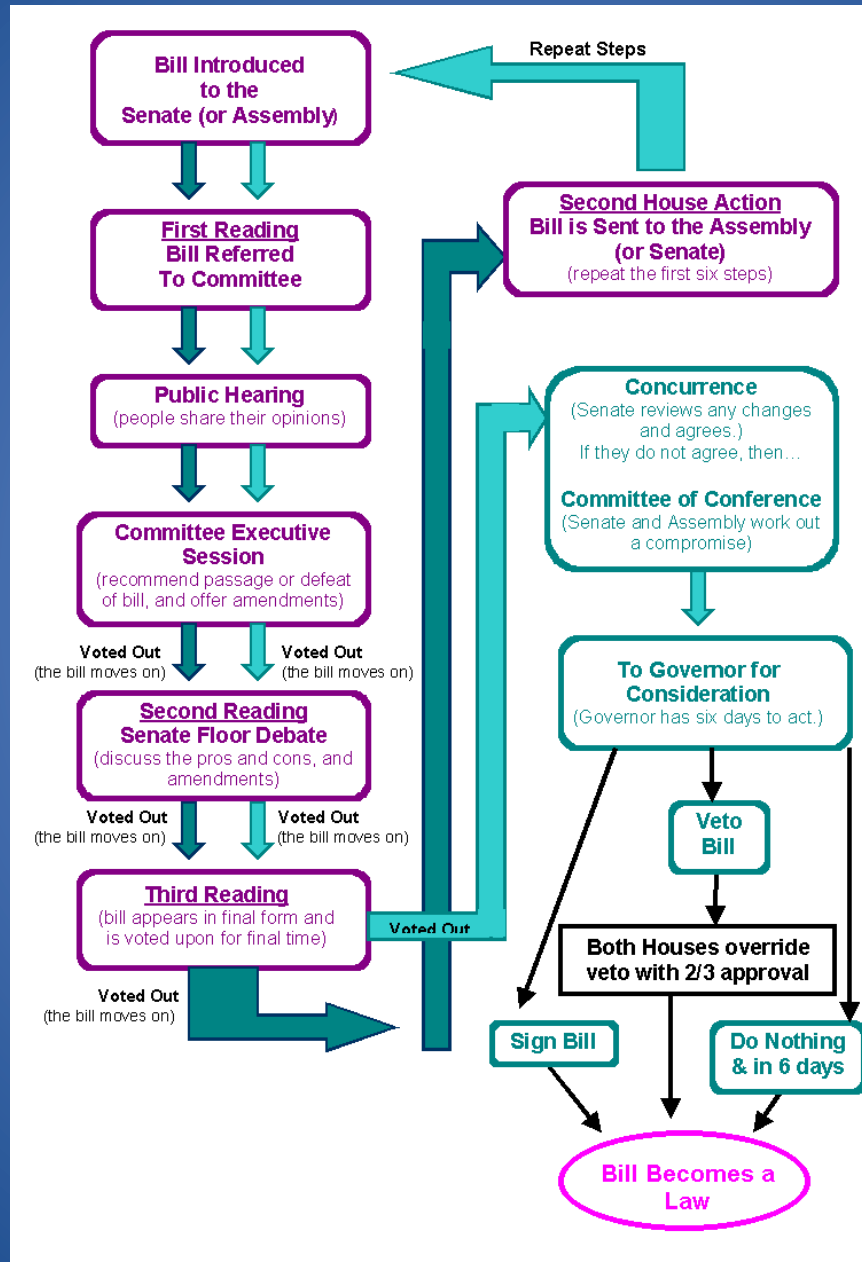
PEW RESEARCH CENTER March 13-17, 2013.

Takeaways

- **Government Generally Not Popular**
 - Congressional Approval Ratings Near Record Low. Opinion of local government significantly more positive than federal government
- **Use Local Government Popularity to Your Advantage**
 - Remind state and federal delegates of your influence at the local level

How Does a Bill Become a Law?

Technically Speaking . . .



In Reality . . .

LOBBYING



Navigating the Legislative Process

Step One

- Find a legislator to draft a bill
 - Important to find a legislator who is able to lead the bill through the process
 - Many times, the group requesting the bill provides a legislator with “drafting instructions”

Step Two

- Find a legislator in the opposite house (e.g. Senate or Assembly) to introduce a “companion” or identical bill
 - This allows the bill to work through the two houses simultaneously
 - If there is only one bill and one author, there is no one in the other chamber to lead the bill through their respective house

Step Three

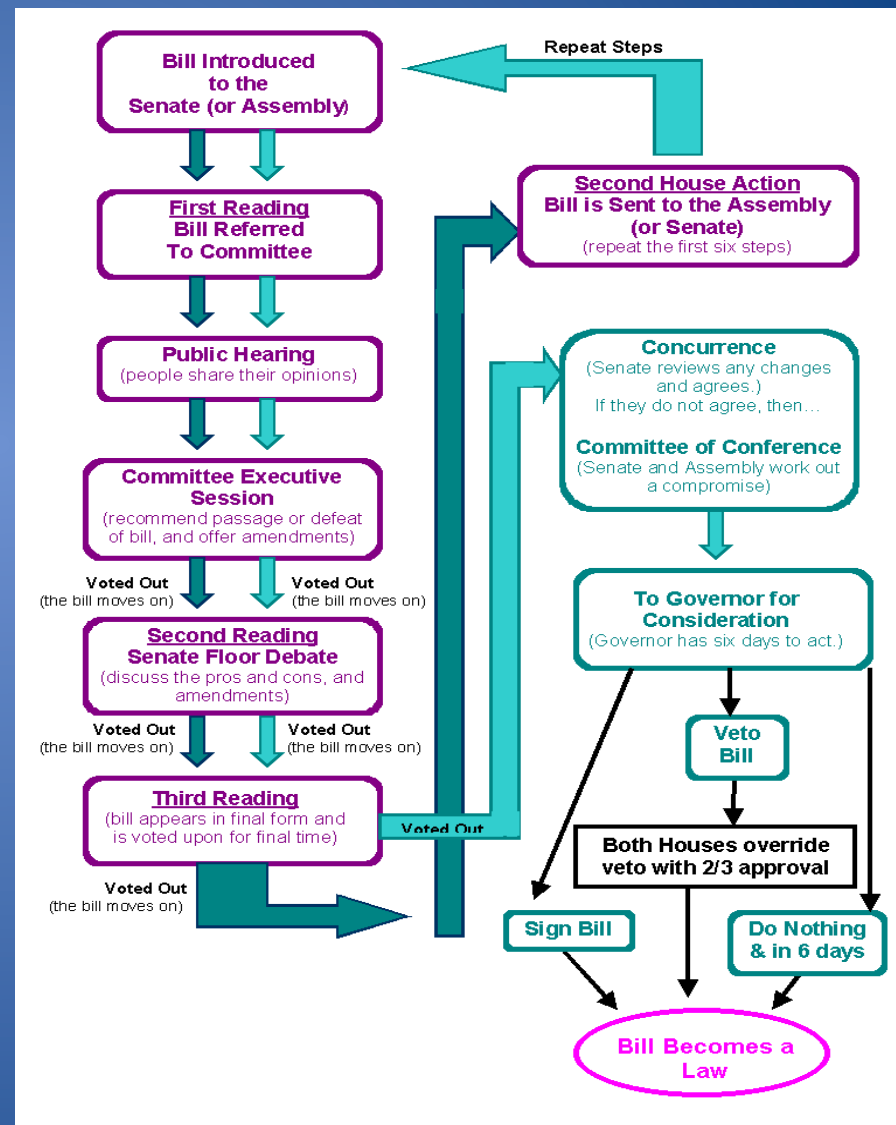
- Identify co-sponsors for the bill
 - Before a bill is introduced, it typically goes through a co-sponsorship period
 - During this time, legislators can add their names to the bill
 - Co-sponsors lend credibility to the bill and increase the likelihood of passage

Step Four

- Find a “friendly” committee for the bill to be referred
 - It is important to work with legislative leadership to send the bill to the appropriate committee
 - Committee chairs are powerful in that they determine whether a bill receives a public hearing and executive session
 - Count Votes!! If you don’t have support in a particular committee, don’t refer the bill there!

Step Five

- Bill is introduced
 - This is Step One on the diagram, but Step Five in reality



Step Six

- Public Hearing
 - Once a bill is introduced and referred, the next step is to have a public hearing
 - At the public hearing, committees members will entertain testimony from supporters and opponents of the bill

Step Seven

- Executive Session
 - An executive session is when a committee votes on the bill
 - Many bills never receive an executive session; they simply die in committee
 - If passed from committee, the bill is available for floor scheduling

Step Eight

- Floor Session
 - If the bill is going to pass after leaving committee, it needs to be approved on floor
 - This vote involves all members of the Assembly or Senate
 - Many bills pass committee, but are never scheduled for a floor vote

Step Eight

- Bill Must Pass Opposite House
 - If a companion bill has been introduced and has been passed out of committee, the bill is eligible for final passage in both houses

Step Nine

- Bill Sent to the Governor
 - Once identical bills pass both the Senate and Assembly, they are sent to the Governor for signature, veto, or partial veto
 - Veto can be overridden by 2/3's vote in both houses
 - One signed into law, the bill becomes an act
 - E.g., Assembly Bill 400 becomes 2014 Wisconsin Act 196

It's important for you to get involved

In 2014, there were 674 registered lobbyists representing 739 lobbying principals in Wisconsin. Currently there are 589 registered lobbyists representing 706 lobbying principals. Lobbyists are employed to protect the interests of their associations or clients.

While it is important Legislators hear from lobbying organizations, it is also important they hear from their constituents. If a matter of local concern is not brought to the Legislators attention, they may not be aware that a concern or problem exists. Many pieces of legislation come directly from a constituent reaching out to their Legislator.

Advocacy Basics

Lobbying: to solicit or try to influence the votes of members of a legislative body.

Things to Remember . . .

What motivates elected officials?

- People run for office to make a difference – they desire to make the world a better place
- They enter office with the best of intentions
- They wish to be liked
- They want to be respected

Who are elected officials?

- They are a product of their life experiences
- They may bring bias with them to office
- They are a cross-section of the state
 - Variety of personalities and skills
 - Introverts and extroverts
 - Detail people and big picture people
 - Leaders and followers
- There is no typical elected official

What is their job like?

- It involves a lot of conflict (resolution)
- Long hours during session
- Time away from home and family
- They are expected to be knowledgeable about a variety of issues
- Elections in particular can be a humbling experience – people are candid

Elected officials face demands from many directions

- Local activists and supporters
- Political leadership/caucus
- Constituents
- Family
- Personal goals and aspirations
- Lobbyists
- Media

How do you break through the clutter of
competing interests?

By building relationships!

Ideas for building relationships

- The Golden Rule
 - Treat your legislator the way you like to be treated
 - With respect and courtesy
- Always introduce yourself
 - They may not always remember your name
- Treat their time as valuable
 - Many people place demands on their time

Ideas for building relationships

- It's OK to go off topic
 - Remember you are building a relationship
 - Be careful however, that your legislator is not deflecting from the issue
- During elections cycle
 - Parades, fundraisers, etc.
 - After they win
 - Congratulate them
 - Note, e-mail, phone call, office visit

Ideas for building relationships

- Make a point of talking with them at least four times a year.
 - In the district
 - Invite them to your event
 - Attend an event they are attending
 - At the Capitol
 - Attend a legislative hearing or session day when they are debating a issue that impacts you or your business
 - Any time (be prepared to walk and talk)

Ideas for building relationships

- When discussing an issue (lobbying)
 - Be pleasant
 - Be clear
 - Be concise
 - Be accurate
 - Be firm but not argumentative
 - Ask for a commitment (when appropriate)

Ideas for building relationships

- Be Reasonable
 - If your legislator agrees with you 80% of the time, you have a good advocate, don't beat them up over the 20%
 - They don't even agree with their own staff 100% of the time
 - You need strong advocates, but you don't need to "convert" every legislator
 - Legislators can often be helpful by remaining silent (rather than opposed)

Ideas for building relationships

- Treat staff respectfully
 - They are the gatekeepers
 - They often can influence the decision of their boss
 - Some go to work for agencies and can be helpful
 - Some choose to run for future public office

Ideas for building relationships

- Reward “good” behavior
 - Thank them for listening to your views
 - Thank them for voting your way
 - Acknowledge them in public
 - Public forums
 - Newsletters
 - Plaques/Awards
 - Local Newspaper Editorials
 - Social Media (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, Etc.)

Forms of County Government

County Government Structure in Wisconsin

In Wisconsin, three forms of county government exist

- County Executive (11 counties)
- County Administrator (26 counties)
- County Administrative Coordinator (35 counties)

County Government Structure in Wisconsin (continued)

WCA does not have a position on which form of government a county should choose. WCA believes that decision is best made at the local level by the county board.

- The most recent county to move to a county executive was Portage County in 2006. Portage County is also the smallest county in population (approx. 71,000) to have a county executive
- Since 2007, eight counties have moved from an administrative coordinator position to a county administrator

County Government Structure in Wisconsin (continued)

- Almost all counties have moved from the board chair serving as administrative coordinator, to having a full-time coordinator, or some other county official designated as the administrative coordinator
- Currently, 15 county clerks serve as the administrative coordinator

Resources

- The UW-Extension Local Government Center
- 608-262-9961
- Wisconsin Counties Association
- 866-404-2700
- von Briesen & Roper, S.C.
- 414.276.1122

Questions? Comments?

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